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VOL. VIII NO. 312 REGD. NO. DA 781

INTERNET: <http://www.dailystarnews.com>

AGRAHAYAN 22, 1405 BS

DHAKA SUNDAY DECEMBER 6, 1998

SHABAN 16, 1419 HIRJI

16 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

The day that saw fall of a dictator

By Staff Correspondent

The nation will remember today the fall of an autocrat, forced to quit this day in 1990 after a years-long fight by the civil society.

Dubbed Democracy Day since then, the 6th of December reminds the people of the bloody struggle against General Ershad's dictatorial regime.

This day eight years ago, the general who usurped power on March 24, 1990 handed over the reins of government to a caretaker administration led by the then Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed.

The autocrat's announcement to step down two days ago, December 4, had already sparked celebrations on the streets of the capital and elsewhere in the country.

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Pre-polls clash in Pabna

35 hurt, condition of 5 critical

From Ranesh Maitra

PABNA Dec 5: At least 35 people were injured, five of them bullet-hit, and several houses torched when Awami League and BNP workers clashed during election campaign at Kachuri village under Sujaganar thana yesterday, the first such incident centring the Pabna-2 by-polls.

At least 50 shots were exchanged during the clash that involved over 200 activists.

The bullet-hit persons were admitted to Pabna General Hospital in critical condition. They are Satharia UP Chair-

man Shamsul Alam, UP member Abul Hossain, both AL activists, and Monayem Master, Siddiqueur Rahman and Pintu of BNP.

Police said the clash ensued when BNP workers tried to resist campaigning by AL workers. JED sources claimed that

four houses of their party workers including that of Monayem Master were burnt by AL activists.

DIG of police, Rajshahi Range and the Deputy Commissioner and Police Super of

Pabna visited the place. The situation is still tense there, police said.

UNB adds: During the clash, General Secretary of Sujaganar thana unit of Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal Mohammad Sham-sur Rahman was stabbed.

He was admitted to Sujaganar Thana Health Complex in a critical condition.

Following the incident, clashes spread to different places of the union. Several houses in the area were looted and torched.

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Control tower at Ctg goes beyond control

CHITTAGONG, Dec 5: The inaugural flight of Bangladesh Biman from Jeddah to Chittagong could not land at the M A Hannan International Airport here today for non-cooperation by the local aviation officials, reports UNB.

Sources said the Jeddah-Mascat-Chittagong flight with 95 passengers on board entered the sky of the port city at about 8 am. It hovered over the sky about an hour but failed to contact the control tower.

Later the plane was propelled forward to capital Dhaka to land at the Zia International Airport at about 9 am. All its 95 passengers were flown back here by an F-28 and an ATP aircraft.

Officials at Bangladesh Biman airlines said they had informed the Civil Aviation Authority on November 27 about the opening flight on Jeddah-Mascat-Chittagong route. According to the agreed schedule, the flight was due to alight here at 7:35 am.

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Violation of code of conduct 7 more govt officials asked to show cause

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Dec 5: The Election Inquiry Committee here yesterday served show cause notices on seven more government officials for alleged violation of code of conduct for the December 10 by-election in Pabna-2 Constituency.

The Committee comprising Senior Assistant Judge Abdul Hye and Sub-Judge S M Rezaul Karim served the notices following complaints lodged by BNP and AL against 5 and 2 officials respectively.

Deputy Commissioner Mahbubur Rahman, Police Super Shah Alam Sikder, Sujaganar TNO Mokhesur Rahman, Bera TNO Midul Kranti Ghosh, Sujaganar Thana OC Delwar Hossain, Bera Thana OC Arman Ali and Petroleum Corporation Chairman Anwar Hossain were asked to show cause by December 7.

Similar notices were earlier served on Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed and Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Finance Dr Mujibur Rahman.

The ministers submitted their replies in writing through Advocate Abdul Aziz Biswas, General Secretary, Pabna district unit of Bangladesh Krishak League yesterday.

The ministers, sources said, denied all the allegations brought against them and asserted that they were campaigning for their party candidate A K Khandaker as Awami League leaders, not as ministers.

They said that Mohammad Nasim is the Organising Secretary and Prof Abu Sayeed is the Information and Research Secretary of the party. They further stated that they were not residing within the constituency area but in their respective paternal homes miles away from the Pabna-2 Constituency. The ministers denied the allegations that they were using official facilities. They categorically said that they were using private transports.

Dr Mujibur Rahman, in his reply through his brother Mohammad Shahidur Rahman, also stated that as a government minister, he was using

See Page 12 Col 4

BNP accuses AL of 'armed attack' on its leaders

BNP has accused the 'Awami terrorists' of armed attack on its MPs and central leaders at Sujaganar yesterday evening, reports UNB.

A BNP press release said, the terrorists opened fire, exploded bombs at the residence of Sujaganar thana BNP president Abdul Latif Master when the BNP leaders in the evening went to visit his house which was damaged at 12 noon by the ruling party activists.

The Awami League activists also damaged the cars of BNP MPs and leaders parked in front of the residence of Abdul Latif, the press release said. The BNP leaders who went to visit the residence of Latif included Barrister Aminul Huq MP, Fazlur Rahman Patal MP, Kabir Hossain MP, Lutfar Rahman MP, Shahidul Islam MP, Rafiqul Islam Bakul MP and Ehsanul Huq Milon MP.

It said the police stood as silent spectators during the attack and the incident took place only few yards from the thana. The police did not come despite they were informed about the situation, the press release said.

BNP secretary general will hold a press conference at the party central office at 5:30 pm today.

Power mongers created division in army to use them: PM

JESSORE, Dec 5: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said her government will keep the armed forces above all controversy as "we want a skilled, disciplined, well-equipped and strong armed forces," reports UNB.

"We've restored the chain of command in the armed forces and will keep the forces above all grouping, division and debate," she said addressing the officers and jawans of the 55th Infantry Division.

Witnessing an winter exercise of army at the Jessore Cantonment in the morning, Hasina said after the killing of Bangabandhu, those who grabbed power illegally by using the armed forces in a conspiracy of the anti-liberation forces, had created division, indiscipline and conflict in the

armed forces in a planned manner.

She said the power mongers used the armed forces to usurp power and had kept grouping and division to use this institution in their favour and for their interest.

Indiscipline and conflict in the armed forces led to bloodshed, she said, many members of the army were hanged through farcical trial and hundreds of innocent officers and soldiers sacked from their jobs.

The Prime Minister said punishment and reward of the army personnel depended on the whims of certain individuals. Coup, killing and retrenchment had widely hampered efficiency, discipline and development of the armed forces.

"National armed forces is the symbol of unity and sovereignty... it is desirable to keep the armed forces above all political controversy," Hasina wanted to know from those who, "after causing massive damage to the armed forces, are today trying to project themselves as well-wisher of the forces."

Under whose regime, hundreds of innocent army personnel were killed?"

"During whose tenure, 17 coups took place in the army? Whose hands were dyed with the blood of the army personnel? When were hundreds of efficient officers and soldiers dismissed from the service without reason? Who used the national armed forces to grab power and stay in power?"

The Prime Minister witnessed the Assault River Crossing Exercise of the 55th Infantry Division, aided by air raids of the Air Force and help from the members of Bangladesh Navy.

The exercise, designed for an 48-hour attack to free the land captured by "enemy" by crossing a river, was shown in an abridged form only within one and half hour.

The Commando battalion reached the "enemy land" by para-dropping and was supported by air bombing as well as

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Of fake dollars and temptations

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

Gangsters get caught in Dhaka

Racketeers from as far as Cameroon and Liberia landed in Bangladesh to make some quick buck, but detective police in Dhaka have put a spoke in their spanner.

Part of an international racket that cheats people tempting them to buy fake dollars for a lucrative price, more than 100 of them have long been in business in Dhaka and elsewhere, police say.

Their activities came to light after the arrest of 14 Liberian and Cameroon citizens by the DB police recently.

Detectives suspect the members of the gang have come to Bangladesh from Bangkok after a crackdown by Thai police. They have also worked in Dubai, police said.

During questioning last week, Cameroonian Ibrahim Modi and his Bangladeshi as-

sociate Mujibur Rahman Rony told the detectives that they had been working in small teams.

Modi was also arrested in Bangkok in 1997 on charge of circulating fake dollars and released in June this year.

Modi told police he had met Rony in Bangkok and designed their scheme for Bangladesh. He came to Dhaka in the first week of August. Modi and his accomplices used tourist visas to enter Bangladesh.

They later targeted "prospective clients" to whom they could sell the "fake dollars". The most suitable clients, they told police, were businessmen.

The racketeers first introduce themselves as business-

men interested in joint ventures in Bangladesh. As they come closer, they reveal their real intentions, DB sources said.

They even tell their clients that they know the dollar processing system as followed by the US Federal Reserve and present "documents" in a bid to win the clients' confidence.

The frauds then ask the clients to go to a bank and try to change the "fake" dollar bills that are actually genuine ones on which they have pasted carbon papers.

At the bank counter, the client does not face any problem with the supposedly 'fake' notes. The clients' confidence is won in this process; the greedy

clients are encouraged to invest further.

The cheats then sell some 'dollar-making papers' to the clients saying a chemical would be required to touch up the dollars. This chemical is supposedly only available at the US embassy and can be collected for customers for US\$ 10,000.

With the \$10,000 in their pocket, they deliver an ordinary bottle of chemicals to the client asking them to wait for 72 hours before using it. Those 72 hours are enough for the racketeers to run out of the client's reach. Meantime, they have already negotiated a big deal.

Police do not know how much money the international racketeers have made so far, and how many here have been cheated.

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Asiad opens in Bangkok today

BANGKOK, Dec 5: The 13th Asian Games, the world's biggest sports festival after the Olympics, begin at the 60,000 capacity Rajamangala National Stadium here tomorrow, reports UNB.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the longtime ruling monarch of Thailand, will declare the 41-nation, 38-sports discipline meet open at 8 pm local time.

A total of 6,846 athletes, including 2,165 women, will compete in a battle of 377 golds.

Host Thailand will field the largest team of 1,055 members, including 803 sportsmen, followed by Japan with 966 members, China 828 and Korea 754. Bahrain sent the smallest team of 15 members.

The Bangladesh contingent comprising 67 members, including 44 athletes, will compete in eight sports disciplines. Out of its eight teams, six are already in Bangkok. The rest two teams—Athletics and Kabaddi—will reach Bangkok on December 10 due to late schedule of the two events.

Details on Page 13

Mahila AL leader chopped to death in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Dec 5: A Mahila Awami League leader was chopped to death and her daughter injured in an attack by armed hoodlums in Raiganj thana here on Friday, reports APB.

The victims were identified as Shaheda Aziz, 40, wife of Abdul Aziz Master of village Shibpur in the thana and district unit leader of the ruling party's Mahila front, and her daughter Bithy, 14, a student of class-VII of the local Bhabanipur High School.

Police said a group of 20-25 hoodlums swooped on AL leader Shaheda and her daughter near Habib Master's residence in the same village when they were returning home from their relatives' house.

The hoodlums axed Shaheda to death and later beheaded her. They struck on Bithy's head when she tried to resist them.

Bithy was rushed to Sirajganj General Hospital with critical injuries. Aziz Master filed a case with the local police.

Police arrested Marzina Khatun, wife of Habib Master, from her residence at about 8 am today in this connection.

Police said the incident was sequel to previous rivalry.



The Dhaka University authorities are grappling with a 70-tonne sculpture symbolising liberation struggle to place it at a new site on the road island near the Jagannath Hall and Salimullah Hall. The concrete sculpture had been raised by Shamim Shikder, a teacher of the Institute of Fine Arts on the forecourt of her former residence. But the statue had to be shifted to make room for a 10-storied apartment for teachers there. The university had hired a crane to move the sculpture after its own equipment failed to do the job. But the new crane too failed to haul it up so far. Artists suggested slicing it in three parts. But an appropriate 'knife' was not available. However, engineers and workers at the site have not given up and continued their efforts.

— Star photo by Sheikh Enamul Huq

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha Corrigendum

This is for information of all intending person that a most suitable commercial plot more or less 4 (four) bigha having road facilities of two sides by Dhaka-Mymensingh Road (comprising plot Nos 34, 36, 38 & 40 on poet Farrukh Sharani and plot Nos. 61, 63, 56 & 67 on Airport Road) in Nikunja North, Dhaka will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction basis for constructing of a Hotel of International Standard.

In partial modification of auction notice published in different national dailies, it is hereby notified that the auction will be held at 11:00 AM on 7-12-98 in the conference room (3rd floor) of Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka, instead of 6-12-98. All other dates & conditions will remain unchanged.

Chairman

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha

GD-1004

Injunctions being used to stop dev projects: Hanif

By Anwarul Haq and Morshed Ali Khan

Mayor Mohammad Hanif has said individuals are taking advantage of court injunctions to stop implementation of hundreds of important development projects in the city.

In an interview with The Daily Star at his Nagar Bhaban office he said construction of many shopping centres, parks, roads, community centres and important structures have come to a halt because, in each case, one or two individuals moved to court and obtained injunction on the projects.

Hanif said this was causing huge losses to the DCC. Citing examples he said half finished modern structures in Banani, Mohammadpur, New Market and Tantibazar areas are lying unused.

Asked what the DCC's law section was doing to solve these outstanding problems, the mayor replied "Unfortunately not enough was being done". He said one of his failures was that he was not strict enough. "I am a man who would always like to solve things in a peaceful manner."



The mayor said he was aware that at least 12 city areas did not get DCC services despite regular tax payment by the residents. "It is entirely up to the ward commissioners to ensure these in their respective wards."

Each of the 90 commissioners gets an amount of Tk 50 lakh at the beginning of the year and it is up to them to prioritise work in their own areas," he added.

About the coordination committee, Hanif said it has only helped the DCC communicate the problems to different service organisations at its meetings. "Indiscriminate digging of city roads without proper coordination has therefore decreased a lot."

The mayor admitted that more than 90 per cent of the coordination committee decisions are still to be implemented. He, however, added "It takes time to implement."

About the huge mountable garbage containers blocking and littering the city streets with garbage, he said the concept did not work well. "We thought it was a good idea. People would throw garbage inside the containers and those would be removed by trucks. But people started to throw garbage near those on the streets."

The mayor said he now See Page 12 Col 3



Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice

This is for information of all intending persons that most suitable (1) Commercial Plot No 12 in sector No 3 of Uttara Town, Dhaka measuring more or less 10 katha (2) Commercial Plot No 27 having road facilities on two side in Banani Model Town, Dhaka (3) Commercial Plot No 22 of Kabi Faruk Sarani in Nikunja measuring more or less 10 katha (4) Plot No 35 of Dhaka-Mymensingh Road in Nikunja Com Area, measuring more or less 10 katha and (5) Plot No 3 Road No 2 of Motijheel Extension Commercial Area, Dhaka measuring more or less 10 katha will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction.

Prescribe application form to be obtained with terms and conditions from Sonali Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk 500/- (Five hundred) in cash (Non-refundable) from 7-12-1998 to 15.12.1998 during office hours and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estate) from intending persons up to 1.00 PM on 20-12-98.

The auction will be held every day at 11.00 AM on 21-12-1998 for Plot No12 mentioned at SI No (1) 22-12-98 for Plot No 27 mentioned at SI No (2) on 23.12.98 for Plot No 22 mentioned at SI No (3) and on 27-12-98 for Plot No 35 mentioned at SI No (4) and 28-12-98 for Plot No 3 mentioned at SI No (5) in the conference room (3rd floor) of Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka.

Chairman

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha

Dhaka.

DFP-25521-2/12
G-2740